IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A wafer storage container apparatus comprising:

a wafer storage chamber for storing a stack of wafer elements, the wafer storage chamber including a base having a wafer area with a specific diameter upon which to place the stack of wafer elements;

a wall structure extending from the base, said wall structure having a draft angle; and

a plurality of columns disposed within the wafer storage chamber on the wall structure, each column having a surface with a line of contact to restrict lateral movement of each of the wafer elements within the wafer storage chamber, wherein each portion of the wafer area has said specific diameter throughout the height of the wafer storage chamber.

2. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein each line of contact lies in a direction orthogonal to a plane of the wafer area.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein each column is integrally formed with the wall structure.

5. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 1 further comprising a cover that conforms with the wall structure to completely enclose the stack of wafer elements.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein each line of contact lies in a direction orthogonal to a plane of the wafer area.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 7 wherein each column is integrally formed with the wall structure.

10. (Previously presented) A wafer storage container apparatus for storing a stack of wafers, the apparatus comprising:

a wafer storage chamber;

at least one orientation artifact disposed within the wafer storage chamber;

a plurality of wafer frames adapted for insertion into the wafer storage chamber in a stack, each wafer frame including at least one alignment artifact thereon and each wafer frame being adapted to assist holding one of the wafers in a predetermined position thereon, wherein each at least one alignment artifact corresponds to a corresponding at least one orientation artifact, thereby orienting each wafer frame in the wafer storage chamber and preventing substantial rotational movement of each wafer frame within the wafer storage chamber; and

a plurality of columns disposed within the wafer storage chamber, each column having a surface with a line of contact to restrict lateral movement of each wafer frame within the wafer storage chamber.

11. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein the wafer storage chamber includes:

a base upon which to place the stack; and

a wall connected to the base that is adapted to surround the stack.

12. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein the orientation artifact is a wall contour artifact disposed on the wall, and wherein the alignment artifact is a contour artifact disposed on an edge of the wafer frame.

13. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 11 wherein:

each wafer frame includes a plurality of alignment artifacts and there exists a corresponding plurality of orientation artifacts disposed within the wafer storage container; and

each orientation artifact is a wall contour artifact disposed on a different location of the wall, and wherein the alignment artifact is a contour artifact disposed on ~~an~~ a different edge location of the wafer frame.

14. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 11 further comprising a cover adapted for insertion on a top of the wall.

15. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein each wafer further includes an alignment artifact.

16. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein each of the wafer frames includes a wafer surface on which one of the wafers rests, and the wafer surface is made of a material that assist in maintaining adhesion between the wafer frame and the wafer disposed thereon.

17. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein each wafer frame includes a plurality of alignment artifacts and there exists a corresponding plurality of orientation artifacts disposed within the wafer storage container.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 10 wherein each line of contact lies in a direction orthogonal to a plane of the wafer area.

20. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 19 wherein the wafer storage chamber includes a wall extending from the base, wherein the wall has a draft angle that facilitates removal of the wafer storage chamber from a mold.

21. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 20 wherein each column is integrally formed with the wall.

22. (Previously presented) A wafer storage container comprising:

a) a stack of at least two wafer elements positioned on a wafer area;

b) a base that includes the wafer area surrounded by a wall structure having a draft angle;

c) a plurality of columns orthogonal to the base and formed on the wall structure, wherein an equal clearance exists between each column and the stack at any point along the periphery of the stack to restrict movement of the wafer elements within the stack during storage.

23. (Previously presented) The wafer storage container of claim 22, further comprising a cover having a continuous wall structure.

24. (Previously presented) The wafer storage container of claim 22, wherein the wall structure of the base is discontinuous.

25. (Previously presented) The wafer storage container of claim 22, wherein each column is integrally formed with the wall structure.

26. (Cancelled) A wafer storage container comprising:

a) a cylindrical cover having a continuous wall structure;

b) a storage chamber that includes a base and that engages with the cylindrical cover to completely enclose a stack of wafer elements;

c) a plurality of columns disposed within the storage chamber, wherein the columns are orthogonal to the base and restrict movement of each wafer element stored within the storage chamber.

27. (Cancelled) The wafer storage container of claim 26 wherein an equal clearance exists between each column and the stack at any point along the periphery of the stack to restrict movement of the wafer elements within the stack during storage.

28. (Cancelled) The wafer storage container of claim 26, wherein each column is integrally formed with the storage chamber.